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INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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S-E-C-R-E-T
NOFORN/CONTINUED CONTROL 50X1

COUNTRY	Bulgaria	REPORT NO.	
SUBJECT	The Standard Bulgarian Military Gas Mask (Shlem 11) 50X1	DATE DISTR.	31 May 1955
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PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES	50X1
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50X1 SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

1. The standard Bulgarian military gas mask is the Soviet type Shlem-11 (Shlem Maska 11) and is the only type issued to the armed forces. Although older German or Austrian types are still used for training purposes, they are gradually being discarded from the military depots. The Shlem-11 gas mask consists of the facepiece, the inhalator, and the cannister. All three components are screwed one into the other by a special "Dutch" locking system, but they can always be taken apart.

2. The facepiece is made entirely of gray-colored rubber, approximately two mm. thick. The mask is donned by stretching the rubber, and fits tightly on the head without the use of straps or other devices. The eyepieces, approximately seven cm. in diameter, are made of plexiglass. Two small rubber tubes lead from the inhalator to the eyepieces, through which a steady flow of clean air keeps the eyepieces clean. The outlet valve is located below the juncture of the inhalator to the facepiece.

3. The inhalator, made of flexible rubber hose, is approximately four to five cm. in diameter and approximately 80-100 cm. in length. It is covered with a thin dark-gray cotton fabric reinforced with steel wire to prevent it from bending enough to cut off the intake of air.

4. The cannister, made of tin and painted green, has the air intake on the bottom. The cannister has five filtering layers; one of fiberglass, one of carbon and zinc chloride, one of calcium hydroxide, and two of an unknown composition. Training manuals state that the filter is effective for 220 hours against all gases, except those containing arsenic. A special filter for arsenic gases is stored in the cannister bag and can be inserted between the inhalator and the cannister, by a screwing mechanism.

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STATE	X	ARMY EV	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC		OSI Ev.	X	

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5. Instructions on the proper use of the gas mask are contained in a training manual entitled Rukovodstvo po Khimicheska Otbrana (Leadership in Chemical Defense). During the training period, soldiers are taught to take the three components of the mask out of the bag, assemble the mask, and put it on, in a total time lapse of 17 seconds. In order to preserve the rubber parts of the mask, talcum powder must be spread on them every two weeks.

6. In peace time, soldiers retain possession of gas masks only during their training in chemical warfare. Every military unit has a stock of masks based on unit strength, plus one third of the unit strength as a reserve stock.

50X1

7. [redacted] believes that the standard Bulgarian military gas mask is brought in from the USSR and that only the filters are made in Bulgaria.

8. The following legend refers to the three diagrams included as attachments to this report:

a. Diagram I

1. Facepiece
2. Inhalator
3. Cannister
4. Air outlet valve
5. "Dutch" screwing mechanism
6. "Dutch" screwing mechanism
7. Air intake

b. Diagram II

1. Rubber tube from inhalator to eyepiece
2. Rubber tube from inhalator to eyepiece

c. Diagram III

1. Layer of fiberglass
2. Layer of fiberglass
3. Layer of carbon and zinc chloride
4. Layer of calcium hydroxide
5. Layer of unknown composition
6. Layer of unknown composition

Enclosures: Three (3) diagrams (two (2) pages).

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